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was in elementary school. I don't know whether it helped me or hurt me in my efforts to learn how to read. I did somehow learn how to read, maybe that's the only thing that's important. But phonics won't do everything that some people might lead you to believe it does. It won't teach you how to accurately pronounce or learn the meaning of any kind...of many, many words, it doesn't do that. It's simply one tool that can be combined with a number of other tools and produce...produce an ability to read. I don't...I also have very serious misgivings about the specific language that's contained in the Witek amendment. In part, it's difficult to know what is intended or what it would mean, how it was going to be implemented. I also do not believe that we should in statute dictate a specific instructional technique. We declined to do that just a few minutes ago in another area, and not necessarily educational technique, but a means of conveying information. That kind of material, that kind of direction, that kind of instructor I don't believe belongs in the statute. Probably somebody will run up to me and hand me an example that shows where we have done that in some respect, but I don't think a particular teaching technique like phonics belongs in the statutes. Schools, teachers should be entitled to use it as a part of their instructional mix, if they want to do it, but I don't think it should be predominant, I don't think we should require it. It is not the be-all, end-all that some people would suggest to us.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Wickersham. Senator Bruning.

SENATOR BRUNING: Madam President, members of the body, this is not a debate I intended to get into, but I thought I would share a conversation I had with somebody that's separated from this debate, and that person is my father. He's a professor of educational psychology at the university. He is basically an unabashed liberal, and in general his political philosophies have nothing to do with the general political philosophies of the folks that in general are supporting Senator Witek, the conservatives, so to speak. But I asked him about this particular issue. And I said, Dad, what do you think about this, you know, having explicit phonics as a part of the curriculum? And the way he described it to me is he said, Jon, phonics as a tool has ebbed and flowed, the usefulness of it